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Illinois
Environmental
Protection Agency

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Governor Blagojevich's Safe and Healthy Schools Initiative

Seeing red about how much money isn't spent on learning in your school because of rising energy and waste disposal costs? For most school districts, utilities are the second largest operating expense.

Feeling blue about how many kids are feeling blue in your school due to poor indoor air quality? Studies show that 115,000 of our nation's schools have problems linked to poor indoor air quality.

Spending "green" to fix these problems after the fact isn't the answer. Thinking green is. Thinking green means anticipating and stopping environmental and energy problems before they start. Thinking green means making common sense changes to school buildings and operations that help reduce environmental hazards, save money and improve learning conditions. That's good for school budgets, students, staff and your community.

Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois EPA have developed a program to help schools take the first step in "greening" their buildings and operations, and making our Illinois schools safe and healthy. Our programs as well as other state re-sources are listed in this brochure. For more information, contact the Agency's Office of Pollution Prevention at 217/782-8700.

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Clean School Bus Program

(www.epa.state.il.us/air/cleanbus/)

Illinois EPA provides technical and financial assistance to school districts to replace existing buses with cleaner models, retrofit buses with advanced emission control technologies and promote the use of cleaner fuels. The goal of the program is to improve air quality and the health of our children by reducing diesel-powered school bus emissions.

Greening Illinois Schools

(www.greeningschools.org)

The Greening Illinois Schools Project is a joint initiative between the Illinois EPA and the Illinois Waste Management and Research Center in the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The project is designed to assist schools with improving facility environmental conditions, while also providing teachers with standards-based tools to introduce the concepts of waste reduction and pollution prevention to students. A green schools program can help schools provide a safe and healthy environment, while saving money and improving learning conditions.



Greening Schools Grant Program

(www.greeningschools.org)

Illinois EPA has created a special program to fund environmental improvement projects and activities at schools. Project funding is available to purchase innovative products and/or equipment that will improve indoor environmental conditions, save resources or reduce waste, and enhance energy efficiency.

Green Schools Video

(www.epa.state.il.us/green-illinois/green-schools/index.html)

Illinois EPA has produced a video and other informational materials that showcase commonsense steps schools can

take to stop potential environmental problems before they start. The video is available for loan from Illinois EPA's library.

Keeping Schools Healthy and Safe Workshop

(www.epa.state.il.us/green-illinois/green-schools/index.html)

This workshop series provides custodians, facility managers, and buildings and grounds staff with information to help them identify potential environmental hazards in schools, and how to properly store and dispose of building maintenance products. They also will learn about environmentally preferable products that are safer and better for the environment.

Safe Chemicals in Education Workshop

(www.epa.state.il.us/green-illinois/green-schools/index.html)

This workshop series provides teachers with information to help them properly store and dispose of hazardous chemicals used in the classroom and learn about green chemistry techniques. This workshop is co-sponsored by the Waste Management and Research Center.

School Chemical Waste Collections

(www.epa.state.il.us/green-illinois/green-schools/index.html)

Illinois EPA has launched a program to collect mercury and other hazardous materials from schools. The waste materials must be generated from educational-related activities, such as science and art classes. To be eligible, the school must send a representative to attend a Safe Chemicals in Education Workshop to learn about curriculum plans that do not rely on the use of hazardous chemicals.

Environmental Pathways: 5th & 6th Grade Guide to the Environment



(www.epa.state.il.us/kids/teachers/education-packet.html)

This free packet of materials includes a teacher's curriculum guide and posters for display in the classroom. Illinois EPA's Environmental Pathways education packet, designed for fifth and sixth grade educators, meets the North American Association for Environmental Education's Guidelines for Excellence and is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards.



Poster, Poetry and Prose Contest

(www.epa.state.il.us/kids/contest/index.html)

This annual contest promotes the use of the Agency's environmental guide by fifth and sixth grade students. Students are recognized for creating posters, poems or prose work to illustrate what they have learned. Contest winners are selected in the spring.

Student Internships

(www.epa.state.il.us/kids/internships.html)

- The Governor's Environmental Corps internship gives students the opportunity to work in specific areas within Illinois EPA. This summer internship program promotes environmental awareness and provides a comprehensive knowledge of issues and careers in the environmental field.
- The Pollution Prevention Graduate Internship Program gives college students the opportunity to work in the field on specific pollution prevention projects. The purpose of the program is to help facilities identify, research and test innovative technologies that reduce waste and save money.

Lake Education Assistance Program

(www.epa.state.il.us/water/conservation-2000/leap.html)

The Lake Education Assistance Program is an education initiative that provides funding up to \$500 for schools to participate in lake and watershed management education activities that benefit teachers, students and the community. Funding is in the form of reimbursement of costs incurred for activities and supplies such as educational materials, scientific equipment, substitute teacher payment, buses/drivers, seminars, workshops, software and visual materials. Two application periods are offered annually with applications due by September 30 and January 31.

Green Youth Awards

(www.epa.state.il.us/green-youth/index.html)

This annual awards program recognizes the outstanding and innovative efforts of youth in Illinois who are working on environmental protection and conservation projects. Projects involve waste reduction, prevention or reduction of pollution in the air, water or land; restoration, preservation or enhancement of natural areas; and energy or water efficiency. Students, school clubs and youth organizations that have participated in environmental projects may apply for the award. Applications are due in the fall of each year.

Envirofun

(www.epa.state.il.us/kids/index.html)

This Illinois EPA web site shows kids how they can protect earth's air, land and water through creative stories, games and projects.



Additional Resources

Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation

(www.illinoiscleanenergy.org/programs/schools.htm)

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

(www.illinoisbiz.biz/ho_recycling_energy.html)

Illinois Department of Public Health

(www.idph.state.il.us/mercury)

Illinois Department of Natural Resources/Waste Management and Research Center

(www.wmrc.uiuc.edu)



Did you know? It has been estimated that total utility costs for schools, including fuel, water, wastewater and trash disposal, averages \$140 per student per year.

Did you know? In many cases, total construction costs for energy-efficient schools are the same as costs for conventionally-built schools because they cost less to operate over their lifetime.

Did you know? Fresh water is becoming an increasingly scarce resource. It has been estimated that water usage at schools can be reduced by 30 percent by implementing modest water saving methods. These reductions can cut operating expenses and help students better understand ways to conserve resources.

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